



Administrative Report

N.1., File # 24-1431

Meeting Date: 8/20/2024

To: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

From: ELEANOR MANZANO, CITY CLERK

TITLE

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL TO MAKE FINAL SELECTIONS OF ITEMS IN THE ORDINANCE, INTRODUCE THE ORDINANCE FOR FIRST READING, AND PRESENTATION OF THE ELECTION VOTER OUTREACH PLAN FOR RANKED CHOICE VOTING.

INTRODUCE BY TITLE ONLY ORDINANCE NO. 3275-24, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF REDONDO BEACH, CALIFORNIA, REPEAL TITLE 2, CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE 2, SECTION 2-2.202 (NOTICES OF RUNOFF ELECTIONS) AND ADDING ARTICLE 4 TO MUNICIPAL CODE TITLE 2, CHAPTER 2, TO PROVIDE FOR INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING RELATED TO RANKED CHOICE VOTING; AND

RECEIVE AND FILE THE VOTER OUTREACH PLAN TO EDUCATE THE VOTERS REGARDING RANKED CHOICE VOTING.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

❖ ORDINANCE

The City Clerk and City Attorney's Office jointly presented an Ordinance, information, and had discussion with the City Council at the City Council Meetings on January 23, 2024, April 2024, July 30, 2024, and August 6, 2025.

Ranked Choice Voting is a method that allows voters to rank candidates on the ballot in order of preference and the ballots are tabulated (counted) in rounds that simulate a series of runoffs until a candidate receives 50% plus 1, and therefore is determined to be the winner. RCV is also known and referred to as "instant runoff voting." RCV only applies to City Offices candidates, and does not include Redondo Beach Unified School District Members of the Board of Education.

This Ordinance will repeal Redondo Beach Municipal Code ("RBMC") Section [2-2.202](https://ecode360.com/42642408) [<https://ecode360.com/42642408>](https://ecode360.com/42642408) of Title 2, Chapter 2, Article 2, Section 2-2.202 (Administration - Elections, Notice of runoff elections) and then amend Title 2, Chapter, 2, by adding Article 4 (Administration - Elections, Instant Runoff Voting).

The ordinance has been prepared for City Council review, input, and requires the City Council to make a few final decisions of items to be included in the ordinance.

The items to be specifically discussed and decided upon include those listed below.

1. Maximum Ranking Number of Candidates due to HART equipment limitation at this time is 6. Select the total number of rankings with no more than 6. (Section 2-2.403(A))

Note: The City of Berkeley, which has been conducting RCV Elections since 2010, initially had a maximum of 3 and increased the number to 5 in 2022. They use Dominion equipment which now has a maximum of 10 rankings.

2. Write-In Candidate
Select the total number of ballot write-in with no more than 6.

Note: The number selected should be consistent with the Maximum Ranking Number of Candidates (No. 1 Above).

Best practices is that there is only space for only one (1) write-in candidate. This practice is consistent with traditional elections held by the City of Redondo Beach. Further, based on the City's history for the past 17-years since Eleanor Manzano has been City Clerk, there has been only 1 official write-in.

3. Overvote is when a voter has voted for more than 1 candidate in a ranking. Indicated for the same ranking.

Options for City Council consideration:

A - the ballot may become exhausted (invalid) and does not advance or continue because no further continuing candidates are ranked on that ballot; or

B - the ballot continues, because the overvote on that specific ranking may be skipped and continue to the next ranking (preference), thus will not yet be an exhausted ballot.

4. Single Elimination vs. Batch Elimination
A - Single Elimination is eliminating one candidate at a time per Round.
B - Batch Elimination is eliminations that are done in batches (multiple simultaneous eliminations of candidates) in any round where there are candidates who cannot receive enough votes to surpass the candidate with the next highest number of votes.

Note: Best practice is to conduct single eliminations, unless there are 10 candidates or more in for a single seat. In the City of Redondo Beach, since Eleanor Manzano has served as City Clerk, the most candidates for a City seat has been no more than six.

Other items of interests in the Ordinance include the items listed below.

- **Skipped Ranking** occurs during any of the following:
When a voter skips ranking a candidate; and
When a voter includes a non-qualified write-in candidate.

For example, a ballot contains rankings for a second-choice candidate, third choice candidate, fourth

choice candidate, but skips (did not select) a candidate for their first choice. Assuming that the voter's second choice is a continuing candidate, the ballot shall be transferred to the voter's second choice.

- **Undervote Ballot** is when a voter has not voted for a candidate indicated at *any* ranking, will be declared an undervote, the ballot becomes exhausted and does not continue in the series.
- **Ties** In the event that two or more candidates tie for the fewest number of votes, the candidate to eliminate shall be chosen by lot.
If there are only two candidates in the *final round* and they are tied, the winner will be the candidate who received the higher number of votes in round one.
- **Unofficial Election Night Report** - On Election Day, the City Clerk will conduct unofficial count of all ballots received by the City Clerk prior to election day. This will not constitute a "round" of counting and no candidates will be eliminated based on the report. On Final Day, the City Clerk will conduct all rounds of ranking until reaching the final two candidates; and will then provide Final Report(s).
- **Exhausted Ballot** is any ballot that cannot be advanced or continue in the series. This may occur due to undervote, no other rankings on the ballot, etc.

In conducting research to prepare this ordinance, City Clerk staff contacted various sources to receive input, discuss best practices, and consider concerns relating to RCV. Staff contacted the following, Rosemary Blizzard, Rank Choice Voting Resource Center, Chris Hughes, RCV Resource Center (RCTab software) HART equipment partner, Steven Hill, Fair Vote, Steve Chessin, President Californians for Electoral Reform, City of Berkeley City Clerk, County of Humboldt Registrar of Voters, and Karen Clakeley, HART representative. Based on staff research, these are the areas that vary from the different cities that have conducted/will conduct RCV.

Additionally, this City will be the first to conduct RCV in the County of Los Angeles, serving as a model to other cities in the Southern California area.

❖ **VOTER OUTREACH PLAN**

The City Clerk's Office has provided the Voter Outreach Plan ("VOP") that outlines the educational and outreach components relating to Ranked Choice Voting. This is a living document that will continue to change based on input, direction, and experiences during implementation.

The City Clerk's Office will continue to reach out to various resources for best practices, sharing of knowledge and experiences to further enhance our plan. Currently, the VOP is based on the one by County and City of San Francisco, since they have had extensive voter outreach success.

The VOP includes education and outreach to communicate general election information to City resident and equip voters with knowledge of choices in RCV contests for city elected City offices with a focus on the new ballot design that will allow voters to rank candidates in order of their preference. The types of outreach strategies include: print media, social media, community meetings, partnering with local groups and organizations, etc., with specific timelines for each.

BACKGROUND**❖ ORDINANCE**

The City of Redondo Beach held its General Municipal Election on March 7, 2023, conducted by All-Mail Ballot. The electorate successfully voted, by an overwhelming 76.67%, for Measure CA5. The ballot measure amended Charter Section 18.4, "Majority Vote; Instant Run Off Election" which replaced runoff elections for the Elected Offices of the City with an instant run off voting system.

At the last Regular City Council Meeting on April 2, 2024, the City Council directed the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance amending the City's Municipal Code to implement a voting method in March 2025 related to an instant runoff voting system, which on January 23, 2024, the City Council approved to move forward with RCV.

After much discussion in subsequent meetings, the City Council provided input, however, at this time, there are a few items in the ordinance that require the City Council's final decision. Upon completing the ordinance, the City Council is respectfully requested to amend the ordinance accordingly, introduce, and conduct first reading by title only. If the City Council approves the introduction and first reading, the ordinance will be presented to the City Council for second reading and adoption on September 3, 2024.

❖ VOTER OUTREACH PLAN

The City Clerk's Office has not previously had a need for a Voter Outreach Plan, however, with the Charter Amendment for Instant Runoff Voting and adoption of the Ranked Choice Voting model, it is important and imperative that education and outreach be conducted. The Plan is modeled from the San Francisco Voter Education and Outreach Program and has been revised specifically for the City of Redondo Beach.

COORDINATION

This report was prepared in coordination with the City Attorney's Office.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is minimal fiscal impact associated with this item.

SUBMITTED BY:

Eleanor Manzano, City Clerk

ATTACHMENTS

- Ordinance No. 3275-24
- Voter Outreach Plan